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Para-Military Plans In Making

When the U. S.-sponsored attempt to oust Fidel Castro crumbled before powerful military resistance and an apathetic reception by the Cuban people, the most logical excuse offered was that our intelligence system had failed again.

Early alibis were that the Central Intelligence Agency, headed by Allen Dulles, did not know that Castro had been reinforced with heavy Russian tanks and jet planes, and that it did expect the Cuban people and perhaps much of Castro's army to join with the invaders to throw the Communist regime off the island.

Now the Central Intelligence Agency says it will not accept the blame. A high CIA spokesman in Washington told an audience of newspaper editors that U. S. intelligence from Cuba was sound, that it had been correctly analyzed and that all the facts had been channeled to persons in the government who made the fateful decision to let the invasion begin.

Once it became known that the U. S. had had a major hand in the debacle, President Kennedy said he, as chief executive, assumed complete responsibility. But he has appointed General Maxwell Taylor to head a high-level task force to investigate the whole tragic business and to make recommendations for a build-up of U. S. para-military

strength, which means guerrilla tactics and other unconventional methods of undermining an enemy.

This latter phase of Taylor's assignment could be what President Kennedy meant when he said that military strength might not be enough to defeat the Communists. If so, we will be much more interested in what the Taylor task force has to say about the future than what it finds about the past.

President Kennedy has the authority to discipline or fire anyone in his administration who might have been responsible for the grave defeat the United States suffered in Cuba. Surely he must already know why we failed and does not require a task force to find out.

If para-military methods are needed in the struggle ahead, then let's get going. The President has left no doubt that we are involved in a life-and-death struggle, that we must "re-group and re-orient our strengths and our resources" and fight for our very lives.

In that kind of situation the American people will not be squeamish about strategy or tactics. They do demand prompt, bold and determined action and must not settle for anything less, no matter the peril, no matter the cost.